

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 OES-05 AID-05 IGA-02 CCO-00

CIAE-00 OTPE-00 EB-07 FCC-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-05

USIA-15 COME-00 BIB-01 OMB-01 L-03 TRSE-00 /066 R

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R 240352Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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E.O11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR LANDSAT GROUND STATION

REF: CAIRO 1841

1. DEPARTMENT AND NASA PLEASED TO LEARN OF CONTINUING HIGH LEVEL GOE INTEREST IN LANDSAT PROGRAM. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, WISH TO HOLD OUT PROSPECT FOR USG FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR EGYPTIAN LANDSAT GROUND STATION. FOLLOWING PERTAINS:

A. AS ACKNOWLEDGED REFTEL, EGYPT WILL BE COVERED BY ITALIAN GROUND STATION NOW OPERATING NEAR ROME. IRANIAN STATION, WHICH SHOULD BE OPERATING IN 1977, WILL ALSO PROVIDE COVERAGE. BOTH STATIONS WILL BE OBLIGATED TO PROVIDE EGYPT ANY DESIRED DATA. THEREFORE EGYPTIAN STATION IS NOT REQUIRED FOR DATA ACCESS.

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B. NEVERTHELESS, NASA POUCHING STANDARD LANDSAT GROUND

STATION AGREEMENT WHICH PROVIDES FOR FOREIGN AGENCY ESTABLISHMENT OF GROUND STATION (RECEIVING/PROCESSING FACILITIES) AND FOR SERVICING NASA AND PUBLIC DATA REQUIREMENTS IN RETURN FOR ACCESS TO LANDSAT SATELLITES. AGREEMENT ALSO GIVES NASA OPTION FOR IMPOSING FEE TO SHARE LANDSAT SPACE SEGMENT COSTS. NASA RECENTLY ANNOUNCED OPTION

WILL BE TAKEN UP INITIALLY AT RATE OF 200,000 DOLLARS PER STATION PER YEAR, FIRST PAYMENT 6 MONTHS AFTER STATION OPERATIONAL.

C. COST OF ESTABLISHING LANDSAT GROUND STATION RANGES FROM 2-6 MILLION DOLLARS DEPENDING LARGELY ON EXTENT OF DATA PROCESSING CAPABILITY SELECTED. MOST RECENT GROUND STATION CONTRACT AWARDED VALUED AT 4.3 MILLION DOLLARS EXCLUDING BUILDINGS AND LAND. (DETAILED COST INFO ALSO BEING POUCHEDE.)

2. BECAUSE NASA CHARGING LANDSAT STATIONS FEE, NASA AND AID HAVE AGREED TO ATTEMPT TO AVOID AID SUPPORT OF SUCH STATIONS. INSTEAD, USG EMPHASIZING DEVELOPMENT OF AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL TRAINING/DATA INTERPRETATION PROGRAMS. EXAMPLE IS US PARTICIPATION IN ECA STUDY MISSION WHICH WILL VISIT CAIRO. (ITINERARY BEING SENT SEPTEL FROM ADDIS.) EMBASSY SHOULD ENCOURAGE EGYPTIAN PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF ECA AND SIMILAR REGIONAL TRAINING/DATA USE ACTIVITIES. THIS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN VIEW ACTIVE EGYPTIAN ACADEMY REMOTE SENSING DATA INTERPRETATION PROGRAM WHICH USG ALREADY SUPPORTING.

3. SHOULD GOE WISH PURSUE SUBJECT OF GROUND STATION (USING OWN RESOURCES), NASA HAPPY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION. EMBASSY SHOULD EMPHASIZE, HOWEVER, THAT EGYPTIAN DATA REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET IN TIMELY MANNER THROUGH DIRECT ARRANGEMENT WITH ITALIAN OR IRANIAN GROUND STATIONS. IN USG VIEW, THEREFORE, EGYPTIAN RESOURCES MAY BE SUBSTANTIALLY ECONOMIZED WITH MORE EFFECTIVE EXPENDITURE ON FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ALREADY SUCCESSFUL DATA INTERPRETATION PROGRAMS. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LANDSAT, TRACKING STATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE043969
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: TMG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760069-0121
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760218/aaaaapgy.tel
Line Count: 105
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NASA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 CAIRO 1841
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: castelsl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 JUL 2004 by schwenja>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by castelsl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR LANDSAT GROUND STATION
TAGS: TSPA, EG
To: CAIRO
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006